DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 085 779 CS 500 509

AUTHOR	Mannebach, Wayne C.
TITLE	Forensic Tournaments Are Expendable!
INSTITUTION	Indiana Speech Association.
PUB DATE	Sep 73
NOTE	6p.; Paper presented at the meeting of the Central States Speech Assn., April 1973
JOURNAL CIT	Indiana Speech Notes; v7 n3 p1-5 September 1973
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Debate; Educational Finance; Expenditures; Financial Needs; *Financial Problems; Financial Support; *Intercollegiate Programs; Speech Education; Staff Utilization; *Teacher Salaries
IDENTIFIERS	*Forensic Tournaments

ABSTRACT

In light of current cutbacks in funds for college Speech Departments, intercollegiate forensic competition activities should be ended, a move which would result in savings that can be applied to retaining current faculty, salary levels, and other necessities. Intraumural and community-related speaking opportunities can be provided to replace tournaments. Stress on theory (cost-free to departments) and criticism (also at nc additional cost) should be maintained at a high level to insure that the values of forensics will not be dissipated. (CH)

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED 085779

INDIANA SPEECH NOTES

Published by

The Indiana Speech Association

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
The Indiana Speech Association
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER

Volume VII September 1973 Number 3

CONTENTS

A Note From The President iii

From the Editor iv

Forensic Tournaments are Expendable
Wayne C. Mannebach 1

Futurism and Communication Education
James Redfield 6

Indiana Repertory Theatre 11

Praise for the Indiana Repertory Theatre Tour 13

Theatre Calendar 14

Debate and Forensics Calendar 16

Book Reviews
The Rest of the Elephant reviewed by Richard C. Hess 17

Argumentation and Rational Debating reviewed by James Benson. . 18

The Statistician's Corner 21

CS 500 509

FORENSIC TOURNAMENTS ARE EXPENDABLE!

Wayne C. Mannebach

Today, many campuses are being scourged by financial pressures. Trustees, administrators, and faculty representatives are spending countless hours in fact-findin, and priority-listing committee meetings. Among these discussions has grown a leitmotif in the form of the question: "How can we provide our students a rich foundation for intellectual, cultural, social, and spiritual growth, and still pay our bills?" Departments of speech are not immune to this question.

Some departments of speech already have experienced extensive budget cuts, and many more departments must face similar cuts in the immediate future. Departmental chairmen often must share in recommending cut-back procedures. Recent recommendations of high priority are eliminating certain faculty and staff positions, changing some full-time positions to a half-time bases, freezing or cutting faculty and staff salaries and even compelling faculty and staff members to take periodic leaves of absence without pay. This departmental head recommends the withdrawal from intercollegiate forensic tournaments before even considering yet alone supporting any of the above recommendations.

Of course, forensic budgets vary greatly among institutions, but the budgets generally compose a significant percentage of their respective departments' operating allotments. My recommendation should reflect considerable savings, and the latter need not prostitute institutional and departmental goals nor generate permanent cessation of forensic activities.

Although college and university catalogs vary extensively in their precise descriptions of institutional goals, higher education generally focuses upon transmitting values, ideals, and aspirations, as well as upon preparing young people for productive personal and professional lives. In short, colleges and universities strive to advance human knowledge and to educate new generations of productive citizens.

Departments of speech play a leading role in fulfilling institutional goals. Generally, the departments foster individual development by promoting such qualities as flexibility, creativity, openness to experience, and responsibility. Specifically, the departments help

---

Professor Mannebach is Director of Forensics at Ripon College. His paper was presented to the AFA section on debate at the Central States Speech Association in April, 1973.

students to acquire and utilize effectively general skills such as the ability to analyze and synthesize; to identify relationships and infer meanings; and to express one's intended thoughts accurately, clearly, and impressively. Such skills are essential to a variety of life roles and work roles.

Forensic activities also contribute much to the gestalt of our youth's education.[1] For instance, forensics offer the kind of learning that frees the student from provincial and parochial attitudes, from bias or limitations of origin, for vocational narrowness, and from cultural particularity. Forensics help to create the raison d'etre of the college or university. The individual student and his teachers are central to the purpose of higher education. Forensics urge faculty members to be readily available for close involvement with limited numbers of able students to assure the transmission of knowledge and understanding in human terms rather than as abstractions. Forensics help to free students from being passive recipients of textbook information and the inert listeners at lectures and demonstrations, and, instead, help to make students the junior colleagues of mature scholars who include students in their endless quests for insight, comprehension, and understanding. In brief, forensics generate LIVING TEACHING in which students and faculty engage in projects which require participants to discover things for themselves, to develop their own interpretation of issues and information, and to solve problems or gain a better understanding of them.[2] Of great importance is the fact that intercollegiate forensic tournaments are not necessary for reaping these advantages!

Probably one of the best descriptions of the teaching-learning situation appears in the Antidosis. Isocrates wisely remarked:

> I say to them (his pupils) that if they are to excel in oratory or in managing affairs or in any line of work, they must, first of all, have a natural aptitude for that which they have elected to do; secondly, they must submit to training and master the knowledge of their particular subject, whatever it may be in each

---

[1] The terms "forensic activities" and "forensics" allude to those student activities which accentuate oral communication and listening. Although some directors of forensic tournaments emphasize other events, the major representatives of forensic activities seem to be debate, discussion, original oratory, persuasive speaking, extemporaneous speaking, after-dinner speaking, radio-tv speaking, rhetorical criticism, and oral interpretation.

[2] For another description of the educational objectives and advantages of forensics, see Richard B. Gortell, "Educational Forensics: Another Viewpoint." The Forensic (March, 1973), 3-6. See also the literature alluded to in Professor Gortell's footnotes.

> case; and, finally, they must become versed and practised in the use and application of their art; for only on these conditions can they become fully competent and preeminent in any line of endeavour. In this process, master and pupil each has his place; no one but the pupil can furnish the necessary capacity; no one but the master, the ability to impart knowledge; while both have a part in the exercises of practical application: for the master must painstakingly direct his pupil, and the latter must rigidly follow the master's instructions.[3]

In other words, Isocrates taught speech through the trinity of theory, practice, and criticism. The cycle seems to be widely accepted today as evidenced by the numerous textbooks on public speaking and persuasion and by literature specifically treating forensics. Of great importance is the fact that intercollegiate forensic tournaments are not necessary for the continuation of this cycle!

After a student has expressed interest in forensics, the next step is for a competent teacher to equip the student with a theoretical understanding of the subject. This can be accomplished by both curricular and extra-curricular activities. For illustration, under supervision in class and within other curriculum conditions, students can read and discuss classical, medieval, renaissance, and contemporary rhetorical treatises; and they can read and discuss the plethora of articles dealing with research in the many fields of public address. Then, too, meetings and workshops of Pi Kappa Delta and other local forensic fraternities and extra curricular clubs can treat such readings and discussions. Hence, there is no reason why intercollegiate forensic tournaments are necessary for providing students a rich foundation in the theory of persuasive speaking. Of course, the author assumes that each institution offering speech courses and forensic activities has competent personnel to teach and to supervise students interested in forensics.

Once the student is equipped with sufficient theory, the next step is to enable the student to apply his theory in practical situations.[4] The possibilities are numerous. Students can debate, discuss, or deliver orations or other forms of public address on local, state, national, or interplanetary affairs before various groups on campus or in the surrounding community. In forums following such presentations, the students can defend further their positions.

---

[3]George Norlin (trans.), ISOCRATES (London: William Heinemann LTD, 1929), II, 291-293.

[4]Certainly many teachers have their students perform brief exercises during the presentation of theory. My main intention is to stress that students should not perform in public without having a sufficient amount of theoretical knowledge of the particular event.

Students can interpret literature of all varieties before social groups, and they can perform in readers' theatre at hospitals and homes for the aged and before convocations comprised of hearers ranging from elementary school children to adults.

Students can compete for scholarships in intraschool forensic tournaments. By utilizing only a small portion of their present forensic budgets, many institutions can provide handsome financial awards--of course, along with the usual "hardware" of trophies and plaques. In light of the soaring costs of education, it is difficult indeed not to think that forensics scholarships would motivate many students to work hard to perform well in local forensic activities.

Students can compete intramurally for positions in the groups to be sent to the national conventions of such organizations as Pi Kappa Delta or The Speech Communication Association. In short, most college and university communities offer ample opportunity for students to experience speaking and performing before live audiences. Of great importance is the fact that intercollegiate tournaments are not necessary for gaining this experience.

Finally, to complete the educational cycle, the student must receive competent criticism for his remarks. This, too, warrants no intercollegiate forensic tournament. The students' teachers or appointed representatives can accompany the students in their various activities and offer criticism immediately after the students' presentations.

Students also can expose their concepts and supporting materials to competent criticism from outside their respective departments, but still within their home institution. For illustration, students can present their speeches before faculty members and students in such disciplines as political science, economics, sociology, history, philosophy, or any other discipline most appropriate to the students' particular messages.

Then, too, students can disseminate their ideas through videotapes, tape-recordings, and pamphlets--media not foreign to contemporary life--and these tapes and literature can be viewed, discussed, and evaluated by faculty and qualified students in other institutions. Then the evaluations can be returned to the respective students for retort or appropriate adaptation to future communications.

Besides saving significant institutional funds and adhering closely to the educational trinity of rich theory followed sy sufficient practice and competent criticism, other advantages can be gained by withdrawing from intercollegiate forensic tournaments. Teachers and students no longer would have to devote the entire academic year treating subject matter they voted against during the selection of the national debate and discussion topics. Teachers and students no longer would have to spend hundreds of hours each year fighting traffic, inclement weather, and tournament schedules while cramped in automobiles often polluted by smoke from cigars, pipes, and cigarettes. Instead, they could devote more time to studying, teaching, or just plain relaxing after a strenuous week of classes. Teachers and students no longer would have to travel thousands

of miles to judge or to compete against individuals and teams they recently met at local tournaments; no longer would have to meet teams who at the middle or end of the academic year still employ debate cases from handbooks issued at the beginning of the season; no longer would have to meet individuals or teams ill-prepared in theory and practice, but compelled to compete so that their respective coaches have all events covered in hope of winning a $25.00 sweepstakes trophy to help justify their spending of hundreds of dollars on tournament expenses. Then, too, students no longer would have to be subjected to judges who are incompetent because of bias, inadequate forensic training, or other reasons. One does not have to spend much time to find literature written by coaches and students complaining about poor judging at some tournaments.[5] I think many of us have read critiques which offer no help to our students.

In conclusion, the author is not recommending withdrawal from intercollegiate forensic competition in hope of catching the attention of some college or university administrator who will then offer him, because of his keenness for saving money, a chairmanship more handsome than his present one. Nor does the author urge his colleagues and their students to crusade voluntarily for the abolishment of intercollegiate forensic competition. Although the author stresses forensic participation in one's own community, he still plans to accompany his students to certain tournaments because he finds them highly educational and entertaining.[6]

The thesis of this presentation is twofold. First, if speech departments are confronted with having to cut back in expenditures, then they should consider seriously withdrawing from intercollegiate forensic competition BEFORE cutting faculty, freezing salaries, or instituting similar activities. And, second, if forensic budgets become the targets of financial cutbacks, then directors of forensics and their students should neither fret nor become paranoic. After all, intercollegiate forensic tournaments are a luxury; they are not necessary for meeting institutional and departmental objectives; they indeed are expendable!

---

[5]For example see: Clyde J. Faries, "The Debater Has No Case," The Forensic (January, 1969), pp. 5-7. Walter E. Simonson, "Prejudice is a Two-Way Street," The Forensic (March, 1960), pp. 3-5. Roy T. Baker, "...Shall Provide Qualified Judges," The Forensic (March, 1959), pp. 67-68. Jack H. Howe, "Forensics, Tournaments, and the Pursuit of Trophies," The Forensic (October, 1958), pp. 6-9. David Walker, "Is Contemporary Debate Educational?" The Forensic (January, 1971), pp. 9-10, 14.

[6]For example, certain tournaments guarantee only superior competition and provide as entertainment plays, concerts, nationally known speakers, etc. Then, too, by attending certain tournaments, one is able to visit the surrounding communities, i.e., Washington, D.C.; New York City; and New Orleans, Louisiana. Surely such places offer many opportunities for educational and cultural enrichment.